

# ATSDR DAILY SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)

## THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2015

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (FOUO)

**SUBJECT:** Gold King Mine Cleanup Site

**SITREP #** Gold King 3

**DATE AND TIME:** Thursday, August 13, 2015, 5 PM EDT

\* **PERIOD REFLECTED:** 08/12/15 9PM EDT through 08/13/15 5PM EDT

**ATSDR POCs:** Tina Forrester, 770-488-3737, [txf5@cdc.gov](mailto:txf5@cdc.gov)  
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**BACKGROUND:** On August 5, 2015, while investigating the Gold King Mine in Colorado, an EPA cleanup team triggered a release of approximately 3 million gallons of mine wastewater into Cement Creek that ran into the Animas River. The local sheriff closed the river for all recreational uses with notifications to any water systems downstream to close their water intakes. This spill will impact regions 6, 8, and 9 – staff from ATSDR and EPA are working in all three regions to address concerns. On 8/8/15, ATSDR provided a letter health consult to the San Juan Basin Health Department (SJBHD) evaluating water samples collected by EPA.

### SUMMARY (August 13, 2015):

- EPA released validated surface water results from sampling of the Animas River collected between August 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Information and data are available at: <http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine/epa-statement-colorado-data-gold-king-mine-release>
  - ATSDR continues to support EPA as they review this data, both at EPA HQ and the Regional Response Team.
- EPA funded the set-up of a call center (opened at 9 AM 8/13/15) for San Juan County residents. ATSDR will support the Joint Information Center (JIC) in answering questions related to public health concerns.
- The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) released a statement that showering with water from private wells would not pose harm, even in wells where testing has not yet been conducted.
  - ATSDR has begun reviewing the data analyzed (sampling results from 16 private wells) to ensure that this statement is protective of public health.
- ATSDR provided technical support to the JIC/SJBHD regarding health education/risk communication:
  - Provided input on SJBHD factsheets (general river water and health factsheets) for sharing with potentially impacted residents.
  - Provided input into a planning meeting with local physicians and hospital-based health care providers.
  - Discussed with SJBHD a potential request regarding messaging related to showering with private well water. Request was retracted after the CDPHE statement was released.
- ATSDR R6 environmental scientist traveled to Farmington, NM to provide on-site support as part of the R6 incident command post (ICP).
- ATSDR made contact with the U.S. Park Service regarding possible support as their facilities have been impacted by the spill.
- CDPHE provided ATSDR with sediment data from a few sampling points along the Animas River.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

- National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH)/ATSDR Office of Environmental Health Emergencies (OEHE) represented the Department on a National Response Team (NRT) conference call discussing the current response. The call was an interagency informational update with no additional NRT calls scheduled at this time. NCEH/ATSDR OEHE staff connected with the National Park Service to assist with questions about health advice for visitors to parks that are impacted by the Animas River.

**FORECASTING (Next 24 Hours):**

- ATSDR plans to share a public-facing version of the June 8<sup>th</sup> letter health consultation with the SJBHD and EPA; ATSDR has prepared talking points in the event of public or media inquiries.
- EPA (perhaps with CDPHE) will likely request ATSDR to provide technical support as local authorities make decisions about the reopening of the Animas River for recreational purposes.
  - EPA R8 will provide EPA historical sediment background data, EPA historical Animas River surface water background data, and Animas River surface water data from August 7-9, 2015.

**ATSDR RESOURCES CURRENTLY COMMITTED:**

TYPE (PERSONNEL, ETC.)	#	ACTIVITIES PERFORMED
ATSDR Personnel on the ground — Durango/Silverton, CO Farmington, NM	2	Technical support to local health departments, participating as part of incident command structure.
ATSDR staff in EPA R8 EOC	1	Coordinating ATSDR activities with EPA emergency responders.
ATSDR staff in EPA HQ EOC	1	Coordinating between: ATSDR-HQ, EPA & ATSDR Regions 6, 8, and 9, EPA emergency responders. Attends EPA data, planning and regional coordination calls.
ATSDR HQ staff supporting the response	5	Providing leadership and technical support to field staff, reviewing data request, interagency coordination, etc.

**ATSDR RESOURCES REQUESTED:**

TYPE (DATA ANALYSIS, PH ASSESS., ETC.)	#	DATE REQUESTED
No outstanding requests at this time.		

**DISTRIBUTION:** OS/ASPR, OS/ASL, OS/ASPA, IHS, CDC (OD & EOC).